

Remarks

Claims 39-54, 56 and 58-60 are pending.

Claims 39-54, 56 and 58-60 stand rejected.

Claims 39, 46 and 59 have been amended.

Claims 39-54, 56 and 58-60 are submitted herein for review.

No new matter has been added.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected independent claim 46 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maloney et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,555,299) in view of Rogers et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,617,471). Claims 39 and 59 are rejected as above, further in view of Bauer et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,899,375). Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's assessment and submit the following remarks in response.

Independent claims 39, 46 and 59 are directed to a method for use in a directory assistance telecommunication system. In each of the claims, the method includes a first service provider receiving from a caller a current directory request for a suggestion of a third party provider of a product or service, among a plurality of available third party

providers, desired by the caller, where the third party provider is not associated with the first service provider.

The first service provider then retrieves the data concerning one or more prior directory requests by the same caller to the first service provider and utilizes at least the retrieved data concerning one or more prior requests to select a third party product or service provider, among the plurality of available third party providers, not associated with the first service provider, in response to the current request.

Independent claim 39 further recites that the caller can return to the first service provider without terminating the call, automatically, in response to a predetermined signal received by the first service provider from the caller's communications device.

Independent claim 46 further recites assigning an agent in the first service provider, where the agent communicates with the third party product or service provider on behalf of the caller to satisfy the current request.

Independent claim 59 further recites that geographical region is identified based on the record, transferring the record to a call center associated with the geographical region and identifying a third party provider of a product or service that located in the geographical region.

In the response to arguments section, the Examiner states on page 3 of the Office Action that the only difference between the present application and the Maloney reference is that in Maloney, the item is not purchased from a third party provider. However, the Examiner then continues the rejection stating that Rogers shows a third party provider of a product or service who may be independent of the first service

provider and that such a teaching may be combined with Maloney to arrive at the present claims.

Applicants respectfully disagree.

The present arrangement is for a directory services. The first service provider receives a call request for a suggestion of a third party provider of a product or service, among a plurality of available third party providers, desired by the caller. This is also known as a “yellow pages” type request such as a caller requesting a plumber’s contact information (the third party) from the first provider (the directory service), from a number of available plumber listings.

The claims of the present application further provides for an arrangement that a prior history of directory calls is retrieved and is utilized to select the third party product or service provider from among the plurality of available third party providers in response to the current request.

Neither the Maloney reference, nor the Rodgers or Bauer references, teach either of these elements.

As noted in the prior amendment Maloney is directed to an improved telephone call transfer system where a buyer is directly calling a provider of goods and services. As noted by the Examiner, column 9 of Maloney teaches a scenario where after making a purchase, the caller then requests transfer to a different party for a further purchase. The Examiner has suggested that according to Rogers this further purchase may be a non-affiliated third party (as opposed to Maloney where they are affiliated).

However, in any event, any transfer in such a system, whether combined with Rogers or not is based on the request of a caller. There is no request for a suggestion for

one third party provider from among a plurality of third party providers, because none of the cited references are directory services. Moreover, although Maloney teaches the use of ANI to recall a caller's history for account information, it does not teach the recall of a past directory request for satisfying a present directory request.

As such, Applicants submit that even if the references were combined as suggested by the Examiner, the resulting system and method still does not teach all of the elements of the independent claims. For example, there is no teaching or suggestion in any one of Maloney, Rogers or Bauer that discloses a first service provider receiving a directory call from a caller using a communications device, the call including a current request for a suggestion of a third party provider of a product or service among a plurality of available third party providers, desired by the caller, where the third party providers are independent of the first service provider.

Likewise, there is no teaching or suggestion in any of the cited references, either alone or combined, that discloses retrieving data concerning the manner in which one or more prior directory requests by the same caller to the first service provider were handled and that data is utilized to select a third party product or service provider from among the plurality of available third party providers in response to the current request.

For at least these reasons, Applicants request that the rejection of independent claims 39, 46 and 59 be withdrawn. Also, as claims 40-45, 47-54, 56, 58 and 60 depend from claims 39, 46 and 59 respectively, the rejection of these claims should be withdrawn for at least the same reasons.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that pending claims 39-54, 56 and 58-60 are in condition for allowance, the earliest possible notice of which is

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earnestly solicited. If the Examiner feels that an interview would facilitate the prosecution of this Application they are invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
SOFER & HAROUN, L.L.P.

By /Joseph Sofer/
Joseph Sofer
Reg. No 34,438
317 Madison Avenue
Suite 910
New York, NY 10017
(212) 697-2800
Customer # 39600

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